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AUTHOR	Mathews, David
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ABSTRACT

Despite a long tradition of public support for public education, America today is experiencing the erosion of public commitment to public schools. Chapter 1 of this book describes the reasons for the disconnection between schools and communities and argues that fundamental change must start with the public and within the community in order to effectively overcome the structural impediments in school systems that tend to block change. Presenting the view that schools are extensions of their communities, the book argues that change must start with the community and its concerns rather than focusing on the schools and their goals. Community development must precede educational reform. Chapter 2 provides a historical overview of the public's relationship with public education. The third chapter offers steps for developing "public strategies" to recharter schools--to discover ways to reconnect schools to the purposes of communities. The final chapter describes what makes public life vigorous and healthy and introduces a new paradigm for understanding communities. An index is included. (LMI)

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